

THE SCOURGE OF THE CENTURY

Hundreds of Infected Coolies Shot Down.
Thousands of Homes Laid Waste by Fire
in Efforts to Stamp Out Epidemics.



Though Many Times Declared to be Suppressed the bubonic Curse Continues Its Terrible March around the Globe.

BUBONIC plague—the dreaded “black death” of the Orient—will never get a foothold in the United States, or in any other civilized country where modern methods of sanitation prevail. This is the assertion of Surgeon General Wyman of the United States army and it is indorsed by medical experts generally. So far as known only two cases of genuine bubonic plague have been found in the United States. These were brought into New York last fall on a steamer from Santos, Brazil, where the disease is now epidemic. There was considerable alarm when the fact of the presence of the plague was known, but this quickly passed off when it became evident that the quarantine regulations in this country are such that it is almost impossible for a disease of this nature to spread. Since then vessels have been continually arriving from Santos, but no new cases of the plague have developed.

“So far as the United States is concerned,” says Surgeon General Wyman, “there is absolutely no danger of a bubonic plague invasion. The plague is essentially a dirt disease; it cannot thrive where the people are cleanly, and well-nourished; or where modern methods of sanitation prevail. It is found in its worst stages in lands like India and China, where the natives are dirty in their personal habits; where the very soil is saturated with filth; where there is an utter lack of anything like sanitation even of the crudest kind, and where the people’s bodies, weakened and emaciated by lack of proper food, invite disease.”

Most Deadly of Diseases.

Under the conditions obtaining in the Orient, the bubonic plague is the most virulent and deadly of diseases. The symptoms manifest themselves in from twelve hours to twelve days after the system absorbs the disease; the usual period being about four days. At first the patient complains of high fever, a swelling of the glands of the thigh and groin, and sometimes of the neck, and finally becomes delirious. The crisis is reached in from two to eight days, generally in forty-eight hours. If life can be prolonged for five or six days the chances of successful treatment are greatly increased. As a rule, however, little can be done to save the natives of the countries where the plague is epidemic. A few of the well-nourished ones escape; of the rest death claims an average of from 50 to 100 per cent. of the total number of cases. This fearful mortality is best shown in the following figures, furnished by Dr. Wyman: Bombay, cases 220,907, deaths 164,083; Hong-Kong, cases 1,000, deaths 1,541; Formosa, cases 2,468, deaths 1,866. Strangely enough this death rate varies greatly according to nationalities. From statistics obtained during the prevalence of the plague in Hong-Kong the following official showing is made, the percentage being based on the total number of cases reported: Chinese, 93 deaths out of every 100 persons attacked with the disease; East Indians, 77 out of every 100; Japanese, 60; Eurasians, 100; Europeans, 18. This small relative percentage of mortality

The Plague in History.

The plague prevailed in Athens in 432-429 B. C. and reappeared eighteen months after it was thought to have been stamped out.

In the third century B. C. pestilences swept away countless numbers in Egypt.

Livy records a great plague that destroyed millions in various parts of Africa in the third century B. C.

In 542 A. D. the plague spread over Egypt and reached Constantinople, where 10,000 died in a day. In the same century it ravaged Italy and Northern Africa.

In the seventh century the plague invaded England and claimed scores of victims.

In 1270 it appeared in Cairo and Constantinople, spread, and became epidemic.

In the fourteenth century the pestilence came from Arabia and swept Egypt, Armenia, Asia Minor, Northern Africa and nearly all Europe. Hecker, the historian, estimates that it claimed 25,000,000 victims in Europe during the century.

In 1496, 40,000 died from plague in Western Europe.

In 1572 pestilence swept away 50,000 people in and near Lyons, and in 1576 more than 70,000 died in and around Venice.

In 1646 the plague depopulated Naples, claiming 300,000 victims in five months.

In 1654-55 London suffered ravages by the pestilence and 100,000 died.

In 1720 one-third of the people of Marseilles died and the following year 88,000 died in Toulon and the whole of Provence.

In 1743 nearly 50,000 died in Messina.

In 1771 the plague destroyed 50,000 lives in Moscow.

In 1835 Cairo again was visited by the plague and one-fifth of the people died.

Plague in Last Decade.

1890 and 1891—Sporadic cases in Tonquin and Hong-Kong.

1892—Carried to Lang-Tchu and Yun-Nan.

1893 and 1894—Epidemic at Tonquin, Hong-Kong, Canton, Lang-Tchu and Yun-Nan.

1895 to 1897—Sporadic cases at Yun-Nan and Lang-Tchu and along the Manchurian frontier; also in various parts of India.

1898—Plague becomes epidemic in Bombay and Calcutta, and famine paves the way for its renewed inroads along the Manchurian frontier.

June, 1899—Pestilence spreads rapidly in Hong-Kong, Bombay and Calcutta, and many cases appear at Rangoon and Singapore.

July, 1899—Epidemic at Port Arthur, Newchwang, Crefoo and Tien-Tsin, and plague spreads to Australia and Shantung.

August, 1899—Disease appears at Tokio and Kobe in Japan, and at Cebu, Manila, in the Philippines, and at Vladivostok and through Siberia, and becomes practically epidemic in Russian Province of Astrakhan.

November, 1899—Plague reaches Manila, and two cases are brought into port at New York.

December, 1899—Appears in Valparaiso and other Pacific South American ports, and breaks out in Honolulu and Noumea, New Caledonia.

January, 1900—Pestilence appears in Sydney, New South Wales and Nagasaki, Japan; also passes Cape Horn and reaches Rio Janeiro and Santos, Brazil; Rosario, Argentine, and the island of Cozumel, off the coast of Yucatan.

February, 1900—Epidemic breaks out afresh in Honolulu after being once almost stamped out; also spreads to other Hawaiian Islands.

by direct sunlight in three or four hours, and in a dry room at ordinary temperature in three or four days. A temperature of 176 degrees Fahrenheit kills the germs in five minutes, and solutions of corrosive sublimate, sulphuric acid, or hydrochloric acid have the same effect.

Treatment of Plague Patients.

The consulting committee of public health of the French Government has framed the following rules for the treatment of patients:

A patient stricken with plague should be isolated and kept in a state of the utmost cleanliness, the persons charged with his care alone to have access to him. The attendants should observe the following precautions: To take neither food nor drink in the sick-room; never to take food without washing the hands with soap and a disinfecting solution; to rinse the mouth from time to time, and always before eating, with a disinfecting solution; carpets, curtains, rugs and other furniture to be removed from sick-room; cloths, coverings and mattresses to be disinfected by steam or boiling at the conclusion of the case, or as often as they accumulate; the floor of the room to be washed daily with a disinfecting solution.

To a French physician, Dr. Yersen, belongs the honor of having discovered a remedy for the plague. Dr. Yersen was a student of the Pasteur Institute and a believer in the serum treatment. At Amoy, China, in 1896, he first put his theories into practice by using the serum from an immunized horse upon cases of a severe type. He treated twenty-three cases in this manner, all of whom recovered excepting two, whose cases were desperate from the outset. Since that time the Yersin method has been tested until its efficacy is now incontestable. A French commission which has been investigating the plague at Oporto, Portugal, reports that in cases treated with the serum the mortality was only 14 per cent., while in those not treated it was at least 70 per cent. In a case in Bombay a European family resided, with a numerous retinue of native servants, in an infected portion of the city. The little daughter of the family was stricken with the pest in a virulent form; was treated with the serum, and made a rapid recovery. As a precautionary measure the whole family were subjected to inoculation, and the same measure of treatment was offered to the native domestics. Some accepted and escaped infection, while six who declined on the ground of religious scruples were all stricken and five died. A more crucial test could not have been devised.

The bubonic plague, Dr. Wyman asserts, is the same old plague that for centuries past has made its appearance at intervals in various countries to claim its tribute of thousands upon thousands of human lives, and which has been known in turn as the Levantine, Oriental and black plague, and black death. The mere index to the literature on the subject—a simple enumeration of titles with authors—covers forty pages in the index catalogue of the library of the surgeon general’s office of the United States army.



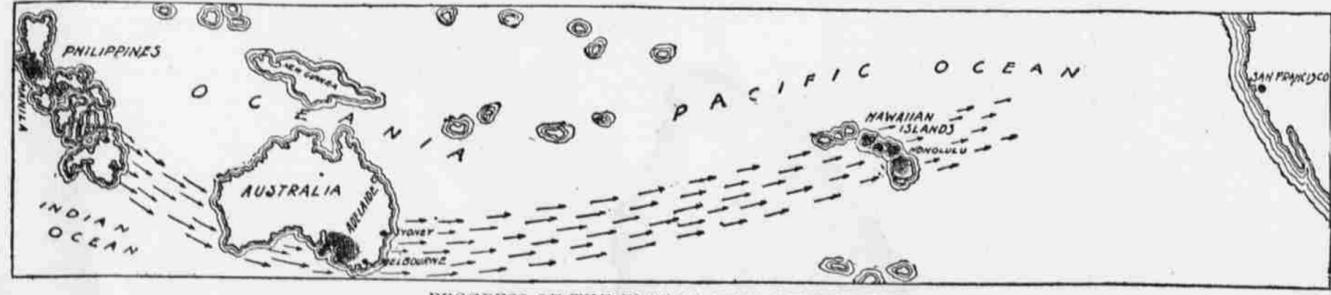
HOW RUSSIA CURES THE BUBONIC PLAGUE. Unfortunate coolies suffering from the terrible disease are shot down without mercy by the Czar’s soldiers.

bodies of these natives lack proper nourishment.

Methods of Contracting Plague.

Medical scientists have determined that bubonic plague may be contracted in three ways—by inoculation through an external wound or abrasion, by respiration (breathing air laden with the plague germs), and by introduction into the stomach of food or water that has become infected. Contrary to the

essary. Once the plague gets a foothold among East Indians or Chinese coolies it is almost impossible to check it, except with the extermination of the population affected. Russia has adopted heroic methods in dealing with the plague in its Chinese colonies. All those affected are taken out and shot. “It saves trouble and other people’s lives,” the Russian grimly remarks. The conditions of environment favor-



PROGRESS OF THE PLAGUE ACROSS THE PACIFIC.

among Europeans is attributed to better blood and stamina, and to the success of treatment in the early stages of the disease, the intelligence of the European leading him to call in a physician at the first sign of trouble, while the ignorance and prejudice of the Orientals prompt them to conceal themselves and reject medical aid.

An interesting suggestion as to the cause for the great prevalence and mortality of the plague in India and China is offered by Dr. Charles W. Dabney, Jr., who attributes it to the fact that the people, when fed at all, live almost entirely upon rice and other grains which contain very little protein, meat or fish being rare articles of diet, while wheat, oats, Indian corn and rye, all of which are richer in protein than rice, are unknown. In other words, the

general belief, the disease is not infectious or contagious in the ordinary manner. A person might even sleep in a bed occupied by a plague victim, or wear clothing taken from his body, and yet escape infection, provided there were no wounds or abrasions on the skin in which the disease germs could get lodgment. Even the breath of a patient is not necessarily poisonous, the greatest source of danger being in the discharges from the swellings. All this being granted, the question will naturally arise, Why, then, should the disease rage so among the Orientals? The assertion that the plague is not usually infectious or contagious in the ordinary way applies only to people who are ordinarily cleanly in their habits. To those acquainted with the Oriental no further explanation is nec-

ing the plague are similar to those that encourage typhus fever, namely, density of population, bad ventilation and drainage, impure water, imperfect nourishment, and inattention to sanitary requirements.

It is said of this disease, as of yellow fever, that human habitations and the soil may become so thoroughly infected as to establish endemicity, or regular recurrence of the disease. The bacillus will infect food and water, though how long it will retain its virility in water is as yet undetermined. Heat and moisture, darkness, and the presence of organic matter, vegetable or animal, especially if in a state of decomposition, furnish the ideal conditions for the propagation of the plague bacilli. Light, dryness and heat are fatal to the germs. The bacilli are killed

Fighting the plague with fire and death—quick obliteration of human beings at the gun muzzle and the utter extinction of dead bodies in the ashes of funeral pyres—is an excess of horror in connection with the progress of the dread black bubonic scourge. The custom of the disposal of bodies of plague victims by the Russian army officials in Manchuria is invariably that of incineration. Between July 6 and 15 last over 300 coolies employed on the railroad work near Newchwang, who became infected by contact with coolie laborers shipped from Hong Kong, and who disclosed unmistakable evidences of having the plague in its first stages, were rounded up and shot by the Cossack soldiers employed in guarding the camps. Their bodies were piled on logs, saturated with petroleum and burned.

WHEN WOMEN VOTED.

Privilege Extended to Unmarried Owners of Property.

Kentucky, which in 1845 made voters of widows and spinsters who were holders of real estate, only followed the footsteps of Maryland, which had done the same thing thirty years before. I have not the authorities at hand which would enable me to give exact dates, but about the year 1820 unmarried women who were holders of real estate to a given amount were entitled to vote, and did very generally exercise the right of franchise.

In colonial days the States of the South generally made the ownership of property a requisite to the exercise of the right of franchise, while the New England colonies generally made church membership a necessary qualification of the voter. Following the idea that only property holders should vote, it was a natural step to conclude that all property holders should vote. Maryland, therefore, decided that where the ownership of property was vested in a woman who had not a husband to represent her she should be a voter.

I have many times heard my grandmother tell of voting during the days of her widowhood and describe the manner of exercising the franchise in those days. There was but one voting place in the county, and all electors were required to go to the county town to cast their votes. She lived in the county of Talbot, and the voting place for the entire county was Easton, the county seat. There was no casting of a ballot, nor was the system like the viva voce vote which prevailed in Kentucky until a few years ago. But the candidates for office sat in the election room, and each voter was expected to look them over and select one for whom he or she desired to vote, and the clerks made a record of the decision. Candidates for State offices were expected to have representatives in each county. These were leading people of the party to which the candidate belonged, and each one was expected to be well qualified to discuss the merits of the candidate he represented. In those days the elections lasted four days in order to give ample time for every one to get to the voting place. Some time late in the '40s the spirit of progress required a sweeping away of the barriers which the property qualification had set up, and a constitutional convention decided in favor of giving the ballot to every white male voter who had reached the age of 21 years. As the right of a woman to vote was based on the idea of property qualification, when that was swept away she lost the ballot.

I merely recall this fact to show that Maryland, which was the first colony to guarantee religious liberty to all her people, and which took the first steps toward securing the present Constitution of the United States, was also the first to give the ballot to woman.—Boston Transcript.

Substitutes for Perfume.

The various devices adopted to serve as a substitute for liquid perfume has never been entirely satisfactory when it comes to the necessity of imparting an enduring scent to a gown. The little silver hearts, perforated and containing the solid pellets of perfume, were rather ornamental than useful, even when there were no substitutes for them. They are still in use and dropped into the deepest recesses of the corsage, exude a faint and not very enduring perfume. Most of the Paris dressmakers put into convenient places in a gown the small bags of sachet powder of the scent affected by the wearer. Nearly every woman, who makes an effort to keep up with these novelties in daintiness, has her set of little sachet bags to be worn in the corsage, even if she does not have them sewed in every dress.

In Command for Once.

A man-o'-war was lying off Gibraltar, and permission was given to the men to go ashore for the day. The sailors amused themselves in various ways—among others by riding about on donkeys, and their want of experience in this line caused much amusement. An officer observing one of the men sitting back very far on the animal called out: “I say, Bill, get up more amidships!” With an injured air he replied: “Well, sir, this is the first craft I have ever commanded in my life, and it’s hard indeed if I can’t ride on the quarter deck if I like.”—Answers.

Soil.

The pilgrim did not conceal the compassion he felt.

“How,” he exclaimed, “do you manage to wring a living from such a poor soil?”

“Oh, our soil makes an excellent sandbag!” protested the dark, sinister inhabitant, regarding the other narrowly.—Detroit Journal.

Vacation Arrangements.

“I can tell a woman’s age by knowing what she takes to the seaside in her trunk.”

“How do you tell?”

“Well, if she’s under 30 she takes more clothes than books; if she’s over 30 she takes more books than clothes.”—Art in Dress.

There is some wonder that a particularly good brand of cigars is not named the “Don’t Worry.”